

INSPECTION REPORT

OAK HILL FIRST SCHOOL

Redditch

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 132820

Headteacher: Mrs Cherrill Illingworth

Reporting inspector: Sheelagh Barnes
16249

Dates of inspection: 7 - 10 July 2003

Inspection number: 249012

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wirehill Drive Lodge Park Redditch Worcestershire
Postcode:	B98 7JU
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ian Ray
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16249	Sheelagh Barnes	Registered inspector	Art and design Information and communication technology Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14214	Gillian Smith	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15372	Patricia Walker	Team inspector	English Physical education Religious education	How well does the school care for its pupils?
22942	Jacqueline Cousins	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27591	Madeline Campbell	Team inspector	Science Geography Music Special educational needs	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Oak Hill First School is a new, larger than average, primary school on the edge of the town of Redditch. It has 452 full-time equivalent boys and girls on roll and was formed by the amalgamation of Arrowcrest and Ipsley First schools in 2001. The pupils who attend are aged between three and nine and are organised into 15 full-time classes and two part-time nursery classes. They come, in the main, from homes in the area around the school. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is higher than in most schools at around four per cent. Under half of these pupils are at early stages of acquisition in English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is about average at just over 16 per cent. The number of pupils with significant special educational needs requiring school action is above average at around 18 per cent. The numbers of pupils with statements of their special needs is also above average at around two per cent. The range of these needs include specific and moderate learning difficulties, autism and physical special needs. The creation of the new school and subsequent prolonged building work caused significant difficulties in terms of management during the first year of the school. Not all of the problems of the accommodation have yet been fully resolved. There has also been high staff turnover since the formation of the school and some classes have had several teachers in that time. Attainment on entry to nursery covers the full range but is well below average overall, particularly in language and personal and social development, owing to the very high numbers of pupils at early stages of development in these areas of learning. The attainment of a significant majority of older pupils, who joined the school when it opened in 2001, was below average, and in some cases well below average, in all three core areas of the curriculum. Evidence points to a lack of satisfactory progress by a large proportion of pupils of all levels of prior attainment at and around the time of the amalgamation. At the time of the inspection the role of deputy was being filled, in a temporary capacity, by a senior member of staff with a class room responsibility. The new deputy is due to take up her post in the forthcoming term.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a rapidly developing school that provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The curriculum is rich and varied and supplemented by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Very appropriate areas for improvement have been identified in the school development plan, as a direct result of the very good quality of leadership and vision of the headteacher. Standards are already beginning to rise, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The difficulties of forming one whole-school ethos in all aspects of school life and developing co-ordinators' roles have been compounded by delays in the completion of the accommodation and high staff turnover. Teaching is currently satisfactory overall. In the Foundation Stage, for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, it is good. This is as a result of the focus the school has placed on developing this, the good leadership of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator and hard work of all members of the early years team. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good and has resulted in the speedy formation of a whole-school set of aims and values focused on raising standards and valuing the contribution of all pupils and members of the school community.
- All staff share a whole-hearted commitment to improvement in their new school.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good overall and leads to the young children in these classes having a good start to their education and making good progress in their learning.
- The curriculum is rich and varied and interests pupils. It is extended effectively by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Assessment and tracking of pupils' work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are good.
- The school is effective in fostering good attitudes in pupils to their work.
- The school provides parents with very good information and the links it has established with parents and partner institutions are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards attained by pupils in English, mathematics and science are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 4.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Designation of responsibilities and leadership of some non-core subjects require further development.
- The behaviour of a minority of pupils in the older classes is not good enough, owing to inconsistent application of the school's behaviour policy and some teachers having expectations that are too low.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There is no previous report to refer to as this is a new school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
Reading	N/A	N/A	E	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	N/A	N/A	D	E	
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	E	E	

As can be seen from the table above, the standards attained by pupils in Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 were well below average in reading, and mathematics and below average in writing. These results were well below the average for similar schools based upon eligibility for free school meals. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is well below average overall because of the high numbers of children at early stages of development, particularly in language. Attainment of many of the older pupils was well below average in all three core subjects of English, science and mathematics when they entered the school when it opened. Currently standards are below those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 in English, mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils generally make satisfactory progress but do not always attain the highest levels they are capable of. Standards are in line with those expected in design and technology, art and design, music, information and communication technology (ICT), geography, history, physical education and religious education. The progress pupils make overall throughout the nursery and reception classes is good. In the infant and junior classes it is currently satisfactory overall and in some lessons it is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their learning targets owing to the good quality of the support they receive. Pupils with English as an additional language make progress and achieve in line with their peers.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to the school and to their learning, particularly in the classes with the youngest pupils.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Pupils move around the school and playground in an orderly fashion. Behaviour in lessons is often good. However it is only satisfactory overall, as frequently the behaviour of a

	minority of pupils in the oldest classes is unacceptable, although it is generally managed appropriately by staff.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils make good progress in developing personal skills and relationships are good overall.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils come to school on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	good	satisfactory	satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall throughout the school. It is good in the Nursery and Reception classes and leads to these children achieving well. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently of a high standard and children in the nursery and three reception classes make good gains in their learning as a result. In the infant and junior classes teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. From analysis of work and from lessons observed during the week of inspection, teaching is usually satisfactory and often good or even very good. However, a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurs and this slows the overall pace of progress pupils make. Literacy and numeracy are satisfactorily taught overall and pupils make suitable gains in their learning as a result. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is well managed and these pupils make good progress towards their learning targets. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory and they make progress in line with their peers. A particular strength of the teaching throughout the school is in teachers' planning, which is thorough and leads to all classes in each year group having equal access to the whole curriculum. Another strength of teaching is in the interesting and exciting resources and materials, which teachers throughout the school use to make lessons interesting and appealing to pupils. Teachers provide suitable targets for pupils to improve their work in English, mathematics and science. However, in lessons they do not draw pupils' attention to these enough, either in work sessions or during evaluations at the end of lessons, for them to have sufficient impact on the progress pupils make.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good. It is rich and varied. Extra-curricular provision is very good and makes a positive contribution to standards.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils make good progress towards their learning targets as a result.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is appropriate provision for pupils with English as an additional language, who make progress in line with their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Provision for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare is good. Assessment is good in the core

	subjects of English, mathematics and science.
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The school works effectively with parents. It provides them with very good information and parents are supportive of the work done to help their children learn.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is very good and has led to the speedy establishment of common aims and values and a sense of whole-school identity. Her management is very effective and has resulted in the development of good whole-school policies and systems. The leadership and management by co-ordinators of the core subjects are good, but for some non-core subjects designation of responsibilities is still not clear enough, owing, in the main, to staff turnover.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are very supportive and actively involved at many levels. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for further improvement. The principles of best value are effectively applied.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance well. Systems for appraisal and performance management are very good and are used very well to raise standards further.
The strategic use of resources	There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum and they are deployed effectively. The accommodation is good overall although there are still some unresolved issues, such as poor ventilation in some upstairs rooms. Resources are good overall and are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents say that the school expects their children to work hard and that they make good progress. Their children like school and it helps them to become mature and responsible. Parents feel comfortable coming into school with questions or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no area where significant proportions of parents identify need for improvement, although a small proportion of parents said they did not feel well enough informed and some have worries about behaviour.

Inspectors agree that the school expects pupils to work hard. Pupils like school and have good attitudes to their learning. Provision for their social and moral development is good. Parents readily come into school to help and chat with teachers. Progress for children in Reception and the Nursery is good. The progress made by older pupils in the infant and junior classes is satisfactory overall. Information for parents is very good. Behaviour is satisfactory overall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average overall, due to the very high proportion of children at early stages of development, particularly in language skills and personal and social development. Attainment on entry to the school at the time of its formation was below average overall and for some year groups it was well below. Currently children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress in their learning and achieve well. They have good attitudes to school and to their learning. Their standards in the six areas of the curriculum for young children are still, overall, below those expected by the time they transfer to Year 1.
2. The standards attained by pupils in Year 2 in the national end of key stage tests in 2002 were well below average overall. This was partly because of the high numbers of pupils with significant special needs in the classes and also because of the very low level at which pupils entered the new school. Also, the pupils experienced considerable disruption over the time the new school was being established and building work carried out. However, some pupils potentially capable of attaining higher levels were not challenged with sufficient rigour.
3. Attainment in English in National Curriculum testing at the end of Year 2 in 2002 was well below the national average for reading and below the national average for writing. Attainment was also well below average in comparison with schools in similar circumstances. The provisional results for National Curriculum tests in 2003 indicate that there has been an improvement in reading which has brought attainment to below the national average for 2002, the most recent year for which national comparative figures are available. There has been a decline in overall attainment in writing with significantly fewer pupils attaining the level expected of pupils of this age, although there was an increase in the percentage of pupils who attained the higher level. A full range of evidence seen during the course of the inspection indicates that attainment in reading and writing is below what is seen nationally. Standards in Year 2 tests and teacher assessments in mathematics and science were well below average in 2002. Well below average numbers of pupils achieved higher, level 3, grades. Standards in Year 2 and 4 are currently below average. This is because pupils entered the school with below average levels of knowledge and above average numbers of these pupils have significant special educational needs or statements of special educational needs.
4. Standards have started to rise but currently are below those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 in English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and make suitable progress as a result of satisfactory teaching. Standards are in line with those expected in design and technology, art and design, music, ICT, geography, history, physical education and religious education. Pupils in the infant and junior classes make overall satisfactory progress in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding and in some lessons pupils make good gains in their learning.
5. The use of literacy skills in subjects other than English and the opportunities which are given for this are satisfactory overall. In some subjects, for example art and music, there is little evidence of the use of reading or writing. Most subjects offer pupils good opportunity to talk about their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways, for example through discussion or in question and answer sessions. Pupils' contributions to such activities are often brief, however, and lacking in confidence. They do not speak at length to develop or illustrate their thoughts. Their speech is indistinct.
6. The use of numeracy in subjects other than mathematics is satisfactory overall. Most subjects, notably history and science, offer pupils a variety of opportunities to record their knowledge and understanding in a number of ways, for example, in continuous writing and through the use of bullet points. The writing skills of higher and average attaining pupils are adequate to carry out such tasks, but it is frequently the case that lower attaining pupils find this extremely difficult.

7. By the end of Year 2 pupils know how to use the library classification system to select appropriate books and can find the information they need within these books. However, pupils' reading is not sufficient to meet the demands of all subjects. For example, in mathematics uncertainty over reading holds back some pupils' progress in problem solving.
8. In general, pupils' very restricted general vocabulary impedes their progress in speaking, reading and writing although their knowledge and use of vocabulary specific to their subjects is satisfactory. In subjects, such as geography and history, teachers ensure that pupils achieve suitable standards, despite the difficulties many have with language, by involving them in a good range of practical activities and investigations.
9. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are identified at an early stage and there is a good match of the tasks they are set to their prior attainment. Suitably challenging targets are set out in individual education plans and reflect individual needs. Learning support staff contribute significantly to the achievement of these pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are given suitable support and make progress in line with their peers.
10. Staff all know children well and have identified those who are potentially high achievers. This is done in nursery and pupils are monitored throughout the school. However, while planning and teaching takes note of the potential of these pupils in general terms, in actual lessons they are sometimes given too little challenge. As a result, while their progress is often satisfactory these pupils do not always attain the highest standards that they are capable of. The school is aware of this weakness and is starting to put systems in place to resolve it.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Most pupils make good progress in their personal development, especially in forming constructive relationships with each other. The caring atmosphere of the school has a positive effect on the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy being at school and keen to be involved in all aspects of school life. Children in the Nursery and the Reception classes make very good progress in their personal and social development as a result of the appropriate emphasis placed on this by early years staff.
12. Pupils have satisfactory standards of behaviour throughout the school. In most lessons, behaviour is good. Most pupils show a willingness to listen and, where teaching is good or very good, become absorbed in the activities. This was evident in Year 3 where pupils explored evidence of Roman life from studying mosaics. Staff changes have resulted in inconsistent application of the school's good behaviour policy in some classes. As a result, a minority of pupils act inappropriately at times and need regular reminders of the behaviour that is expected in classrooms and around the school. On occasions, some pupils, especially in Year 4, are easily distracted and this reduces their rate of learning. This is generally when teaching is less demanding or the teacher new to the class. In the playground, play can be boisterous, although the use of small games equipment at lunchtimes does temper this behaviour and allows pupils to play constructively. There is also an absence of oppressive or racist behaviour. There has been one, fixed-period, exclusion in the past year.
13. Pupils develop positive relationships and increase their independence through responsibilities around the school. They demonstrate good relationships in the way that most of them work and play together and in the way they show respect for all adults in the school. Personal development is also enhanced by visits out of school such as to the local church and to Chedworth Roman villa. Pupils are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning, undertaking personal research. The "tea days" allow pupils to wait on tables for parents, but the school is aware that they could benefit from further opportunities to develop independence and show initiative.
14. Most pupils who have special learning needs are not immediately evident in classrooms or around school because of the inclusive way that teachers and support staff treat all. Learning support staff work well with these pupils and their social skills are develop appropriately. Pupils benefit from earlier identification of learning or behavioural difficulties, which means that they, and their class teachers, are supported to ensure they make suitable progress. All staff practise and promote the school's central values of care and respect. Pupils grow in confidence as a result and achieve well in their personal and social development.

15. Overall attendance was satisfactory during the academic year that preceded the inspection. It has, however, since fallen slightly and is now just below the national average. When pupils are absent, it is usually because they have been ill, but around one fifth of all absences arise because parents have taken their children on a holiday during the school term. This inevitably means that these pupils miss the work that is undertaken by the rest of the class and this could put them at a disadvantage in the future.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall throughout the school. It is good in the youngest classes and leads to these children achieving well. In the infant and junior classes it is satisfactory overall.
17. In the Nursery and Reception classes the teaching is good overall and at times very good, because of the good understanding staff have of the needs of young children and the appropriately strong emphasis placed on developing children's personal and social and language skills. There is very good management of behaviour and high expectations of response. Adults get to know the children very well and relationships are very good. Teachers and support staff work well together. The organisation is good and routines are well established. Movement from one activity to another runs very smoothly. Children learn with enjoyment through planned play activities and more directed tasks in the six areas of learning. Proper emphasis is placed on the teaching of basic skills, with children taking part in literacy and numeracy activities, which help them to help them to get used to learning in more formal situations. For example, when singing nursery rhymes at the end of a session, the teacher uses a book for the children to see the pictures as they sing. In this way they make good progress in learning to use illustrations as an aid to working out the text, as well as learning about the order in which the pages are turned.
18. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory throughout the school. Overall, teachers make suitable use of opportunities to use ICT although, on occasion opportunities are missed. In the junior classes, however, a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurs for a variety of reasons and this slows the overall pace of progress pupils make. During the week of inspection, several lessons were seen which were not of a sufficiently high standard. Each of these was in a different class and subject and was due to a different reason. Namely, lack of confidence in the subject being taught in one lesson, lack of clarity in explanation to pupils in another and expectations of behaviour and response which were too low, in a third.
19. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good and these pupils make good progress towards their learning targets. Teachers ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, capability or background are appropriately included and involved in all aspects of the programme of work. Through carefully chosen questions, teachers and support staff make sure that pupils are made to think whilst having the opportunity to display their knowledge and be successful. For example, pupils in Year 3 had a very effective discussion with their learning support assistant about what was required in their stories about a whale. The assistant was very effective in ensuring that they were very clear about their task and how they might feel if they were the whale in the story. As a result, they were very keen to put their ideas down in writing and were very disappointed when the end of the lesson came and begged to be allowed to work on.
20. Where necessary, different activities and worksheets are provided, that challenge pupils at a generally appropriate level. Teachers know which pupils are potentially high achievers and have made suitable arrangements. For example, pupils in Year 3, who are good at English, are stretched by task and expectation. However, there are too many occasions where highest attaining pupils need even greater challenges than those presented.
21. A particular strength of the teaching throughout the school is in teachers' planning, which is thorough and leads to all classes in each year group having equal access to the whole curriculum. Teachers plan together to ensure that lessons in parallel classes follow the same

general lines. They make minor adaptations to these lessons to bring their own flavour to them. For example, in literacy lessons in the Reception classes, one teacher used picture cards and drawings to help children remember the different sounds, while in another class the teacher used puppets and toys to illustrate the same lesson in her own style.

22. Another particular strength is in the use of interesting and exciting resources and materials, which teachers throughout the school use to make lessons appealing to pupils. For example, in teaching history, teachers in the junior classes make good use of information about mosaics to draw pupils' attention to daily life in Roman Britain and the myths and beliefs of everyday Romans. Pupils find the pictures and the information they reveal fascinating and are very interested and concentrate well as a result. In another lesson, pupils working on ways to describe common objects responded with great enthusiasm to the provision of a "pack" containing a range of interesting objects such as seashells and china ornaments that their teacher gave them. In this way teachers ensure that pupils attain suitable standards and their lack of confidence in language skills does not disadvantage them in other subjects.
23. Teachers provide suitable targets for pupils to improve their work in English, mathematics and science. However, they do not draw pupils' attention to these enough, in either work sessions or during evaluations, for pupils to know them well and for them to have sufficient impact on the progress they make in their learning. Although pupils have targets in their books for English and, mathematics, little reference is made to these in lessons and pupils rarely refer to them as they work. Targets for science are shared with parents but are not explicitly shared with the pupils themselves in lessons. Some of the targets are written in complicated language which makes it difficult for pupils to always know exactly what they need to do to improve. Teachers make a point of evaluating work done in discussions with the class at the end of lessons, but on many occasions it is the teacher who makes evaluations of how work has gone, and not the pupils. Opportunities for pupils themselves to explain how well they have completed their work and what they need to improve it further are too few for them to learn how to take responsibility for their own learning.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

24. The quality of the school's curriculum is good and meets legal requirements. It is sufficiently broad; all subjects are taught including personal, health and social education. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and there are many activities matched carefully to pupils' particular needs in reading and writing. The National Numeracy Strategy has been established satisfactorily, with the start of lessons being used well to develop pupils' quick mental recall of number. Homework is given out to the oldest pupils, but it is not given out regularly in all classes. Pupils take reading books home regularly and many practice their skills.
25. In the Foundation Stage, in the Nursery and reception classes teaching is planned effectively following the six areas of learning for young children. Throughout the school, detailed policies are in place for all subjects and good schemes of work identify the knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught as pupils move up through the school. There are satisfactory teachers' weekly plans for all subjects. Teachers plan effectively to use a range of resources such as photographs and plans to bring subjects such as geography and history alive and make them interesting for the pupils. Although weekly planning ensures that pupils of all abilities are satisfactorily challenged by tasks in most lessons, it does not always set specific challenges for more able pupils in some subjects. Teachers' plans are well thought out to ensure links are made between topics. For example, in Year 4 there are satisfactory links between ICT and history when pupils word process their thoughts about a visit from a Viking presentation. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well planned and there is a programme of study which is to be used from September. Weekly sessions are used well to develop pupils' personal, social and health development as well as citizenship. The school assists effectively in teaching pupils about the uses and misuses of drugs. The governors have agreed that the middle school will teach formal sex education in Years 5 and 6.
26. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Lessons are planned to meet individual needs, taking account of targets in individual education plans. Where pupils do not have plans but have been identified as a cause for concern, their progress and development is monitored by class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator. Support assistants are well qualified and have taken part in training to meet individual needs. For example, pupils with

hearing impairment have continual signing given so that they have full access to all aspects of school.

27. Extra-curricular provision is very good. There is good attendance at a wide range of activities, including, ICT, after and before school, gardening, book making, choir, recorders, sewing, science, skittle ball, football and book clubs. These opportunities outside lessons make a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Many visitors enliven the curriculum, including members of the clergy and theatre groups. A good range of school visits linked to curriculum studies take pupils to a variety of places. For example, pupils visit a museum, synagogue, abbey and science centre.
28. The contribution made to pupils' learning by the community is satisfactory. Some people from the local community come into school to work with pupils, such as members of the clergy. Pupils take part in county musical activities and inter-school sports days.
29. Links have been very effectively established with the local middle school that most pupils will attend. Teachers from Oak Hill First School meet middle school teachers in the term before pupils transfer and then pupils visit their new school. Teachers from the middle school come and observe pupils working in their first school classrooms. One of the middle school teachers takes Year 4 pupils for physical education activities in the summer term. Teachers from local schools have regular meetings about subject areas and other responsibilities. Nearly all teachers from Oak Hill First School have visited a local school with officially recognized good practice to observe successful teaching. Teachers and playgroup leaders meet three times a year to discuss best practice. The school discusses new pupils with the playgroup. Therefore children are prepared very well for starting school and are very effectively prepared for transfer to middle school.
30. Equal opportunities are satisfactory overall. The school works hard to ensure that pupils receive a similar curriculum and learning objectives are shared with all classes in the year group. Teachers in each year group plan together and share resources effectively. However, assessment is not used as well as it could be to ensure that greater numbers of pupils work at above average levels of attainment.
31. Overall, pupils' personal development is good and is reflected in their attitudes and relationships. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is successfully promoted through daily acts of collective worship and these enhance pupils' awareness of positive values and attitudes to each other and their community. Opportunities for quiet reflection and worship enable pupils to be aware of the importance of prayer as a way of communicating with God. Spirituality is fostered through the many opportunities for pupils to consider the "special-ness" of summer and time spent with friends and families. Older pupils write poetry, imagining "If I had wings...I'd fly to the sky and fly up high with the birds". Pupils are tolerant and respectful of other people's beliefs through religious education lessons where they learn about different religions. For example, Year 1 pupils were asked to place Easter, Divali, Ramadan and Christmas on a time line. As pupils progress through the school, most show greater maturity in thinking about their own behaviour and the feelings of others. However, more opportunities could be specifically planned to raise pupils' awareness of special moments and the wonder of their creation.
32. Good provision for moral development is seen throughout the school. Pupils are aware of school rules because they are displayed in classrooms and discussed. They are also aware of the sanctions procedure that is applied consistently across the school. The pupils are aware of what is right and wrong and teachers work hard to promote good behaviour by all pupils. Year 4 pupils wrote about "Bad things to do" such as stealing. Pupils are encouraged to think about the choices they have to make and the implications for themselves and others. An award scheme is in use where classmates identify the strengths of the chosen pupil. The equal opportunities policy, which is consistently applied to all aspects of school life, ensures fairness for all.
33. Provision for social development is similarly good and pupils are encouraged to become aware of their responsibilities to the school, the local and global community. Pupils have some opportunities to develop responsibility and self-confidence. They organise and run "tea days", where children take orders and wait on parents. The organisation of lessons provides many opportunities for pupils to work with a partner or as part of a small group which encourages the

development of self-esteem and confidence. Most pupils show care and concern for one another when playing and working together. There is a wide variety of extra-curricular activities on offer at lunchtimes and after school, which the pupils are eager to attend. Parents and pupils eagerly support fund-raising events to collect money for local and world charities.

34. Provision for cultural development is good. Visits to sites of outside interest and visitors to the school enhance pupils' understanding of the subjects they learn in lessons. Assemblies, celebrations and religious education lessons foster an awareness of other cultures and faiths. Stories from Fiji and South America were told during collective worship and pupils have opportunities to learn and appreciate the richness of their own and other people's culture through literature, art, geography and history. Year 3 pupils study their immediate locality and this is used in Year 4 where pupils compare and contrast Redditch and an Indian village. Through religious education lessons, pupils study the major world religions and all pupils are made aware of important festivals such as Eid and Christmas.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. All members of staff share a wholehearted and sincere commitment to pupils' welfare and very good teamwork ensures that pupils are well looked after during the school day. Pupils say that the time they spend at school is happy and enjoyable and this is reflected in their positive attitudes and regular attendance. Children joining the nursery and reception classes are gradually and sensitively introduced to school routines and this helps them to settle in quickly. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is very thorough and procedures for the assessment of pupils' work, including those with special educational needs, are good. Teachers, however, do not always put this information to sufficiently good use when planning what pupils will do next. This results in some higher attaining pupils not being consistently well challenged. Procedures for child protection are good and regular training ensures that all members of staff are familiar with their responsibilities. Routine health and safety procedures are in place and risk assessment is very well established. Procedures to promote good behaviour are effective, although there are occasional incidents of rough behaviour in the playground. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are effective.
36. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good overall, particularly in English, mathematics and, to a lesser degree, science. The school has made good progress since it opened two years ago in setting up procedures for assessment, identifying areas where there is a need for further work and in meeting these needs. The use to which this assessment information is put in planning the curriculum is satisfactory.
37. There is a wide range of information available about individual pupils' targets for each year and by the ages of seven and nine, which are broken down into "comfort" and "challenge" targets - what they ought to achieve and what they might be able to achieve. As challenge targets are met they are replaced by more demanding ones. These targets are based on the analysis of the assessments made of pupils when they enter the school and in National Curriculum testing at the age of seven. Good use is also made of additional statistical information provided by the local authority in order to identify any groups or individual pupils who are not making sufficient progress and procedures are put in place to support and track their progress and analyse the effectiveness of this.
38. All pupils have individual targets for English and mathematics, which are expressed as a description of the improvements they should be attempting to make. Pupils do not know the National Curriculum levels at which they should be aiming, despite the fact that most would be able to use this knowledge to understand and track their own progress. Although these targets, and the targets which are sent to parents on a termly basis, are precise and specific, they are of limited use because they are frequently expressed in very technical language which many pupils would find very difficult to understand. This drawback has been recognised and a new style of targets is being produced, initially in science, which are more easily understood by those who are not teachers. The difficulty which is experienced by teachers in setting targets which are sufficiently specific and can at the same time be understood by pupils has been recognised and a useful guidance booklet has recently been produced within the school to give teachers information and support for doing this. Good use is made of the regular tracking of each pupil's progress

towards their targets. A termly meeting between each class teacher and the headteacher, at which, using the information gained through half termly assessments in English, mathematics and science, the progress of each pupil is reviewed.

39. A particular strength of the assessment procedures is the good identification of areas where further development is needed and the introduction of measures which meet this need. For example, the lack of high challenge for higher attaining pupils was recognised as a weakness, it was discussed at a staff meeting and measures are beginning to be put in place to offer more challenge in mathematics.
40. Owing to the initial focus on core subjects the assessment of all subjects other than English, mathematics and science is less well developed. Methods of assessment vary from teacher to teacher and is usually only carried out formally once a year, when teachers compare the attainment of their pupils against descriptions of what they should be able to attain.
41. The use to which the wide range of assessment information is put in planning the curriculum is satisfactory but less comprehensive. It is now being used in the longer-term planning of teaching and is also used by teachers when planning individual lessons to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. There is little evidence to indicate that teachers use assessment information to a significant degree when planning or revising the in those subjects where assessment is still informal.
42. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. Teachers and support staff have a good knowledge of a wide range of learning difficulties and a clear understanding of how pupils' learning is affected by their physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. The co-ordinator for special educational needs monitors provision to ensure the requirements of these pupils are met and that they make suitable progress. She runs courses for pupils and speaks with parents on managing behaviour and relationships in order that pupils get support at school and home. Individual education plans are good and reviewed with parents and pupils each term. All include clear targets for, where necessary, behaviour, literacy and numeracy. Plans are implemented consistently and regularly monitored by teachers, and classroom assistants to sustain pupils' achievement.
43. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are very effective. Relationships between pupils and members of staff are good and teachers are very sensitive to pupils' "ups and downs". This helps to ensure that any emerging personal or academic problems are identified and addressed at an early stage. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers compile a profile for each child and, over time, this forms a cumulative record of his or her development. Elsewhere in the school, the day-to-day records of individual pupils' attendance, behaviour, personal and academic targets contribute to an overall picture of each pupil's personal development. In addition, the headteacher meets teachers each term and discusses the academic progress and personal development of each and every child in the school. She also works closely with external agencies in order to resolve any issues that prevent particular individuals from attending school and learning effectively.
44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. There is a clear code of conduct and this forms the cornerstone of everyday school life. In addition, at the start of each academic year, each class agrees its own set of rules and teachers regularly refer to these during the school day. Teachers always provide good examples of how to behave and pupils know exactly what is, and what is not, acceptable and most conform to these high expectations. Pupils are proud of their work and are delighted to have their achievements recognised during the weekly achievement assembly. Pupils who behave particularly well may receive stamps or stickers and the whole class is able to choose how to spend their "Golden Time" on a Friday. Pupils say that those who misbehave are managed firmly but very fairly and that procedures for eliminating bullying are effective. Overall, the level of racial harmony is good and this is a testament to the school's very successful policy for educational and social inclusion.
45. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. An electronic registration system helps the school to monitor attendance closely and any emerging trends are quickly spotted. The education welfare officer regularly comes into school to liaise with the head teacher and each and every absence is followed up. Although the school discourages parents from booking term time holidays, these continue to account for one absence in every five.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. This inspection took place less than two years after the school opened. At the time of its formation, many of the parents shared misgivings about the changes and members of staff have since worked hard to resolve any remaining concerns. They are doing everything they reasonably can to make parents feel welcome and, to this end, are meeting with considerable success. Although relatively few parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and fewer than one in six returned the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of those who voiced an opinion indicate that they are pleased with many aspects of the school's work. Indeed, there are no areas that cause any particular concern. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views.
47. The school would, however, like to involve parents more fully in their children's education. It keeps parents very well informed about the day-to-day life of the school, the work their children are undertaking and about their children's progress. At the start of each term, for example, parents receive several newsletters that detail forthcoming topics, as well as various hints and tips on how to help their children at home. Pupils' annual reports contain lots of useful information and give a good idea of what pupils can and cannot do, as well as a very clear idea as to how a child's progress compares with national norms. Each term, parents also receive target sheets that specify exactly what their children need to do in order to improve the standard of their work in English, mathematics and science. Individual targets, however, are sometimes expressed in educational language and this is not always particularly easy to understand. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are very informative and are supplemented by regular information evenings that help to explain the contemporary teaching of English and mathematics; these meetings are well attended.
48. Links between home and school are effective and parents' interest and support encourages their children to work hard and to do their best. Parents enjoy coming along to their children's assemblies and these are usually well attended. The school association has recently re-formed and it is now organising a number of fund-raising and social events. Parents' involvement encourages their children to participate in school life and to do their best. They provide refreshments and cakes for sale during the termly 'tea days' and recently prepared unfamiliar food, such as chapattis, during the healthy eating day. Funds raised have been used to provide presents for those who are leaving the school and playground equipment that is used during the lunchtime break.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership of the school is good overall and that of the headteacher is very good. She has effectively shared her vision of the school in the future with all staff and members of the school community. The drive is towards attaining higher standards for all and inclusion for all in the full range of things the school has to offer. The contributions and efforts of all staff and pupils are highly valued. This clarity of vision has led to the speedy establishment of common aims and values and a sense of whole school identity. At the time of inspection the role of deputy head was being undertaken in an acting capacity by a senior staff member, until the newly appointed deputy could take up her post. While this work was being undertaken diligently and well, the classroom responsibility of the acting deputy limits many aspects of the role in this large school.
50. The aims and values of the school are reflected very effectively in its work. The senior management is determined that pupils from all groups shall have equality of opportunity. Pupils with special needs are supported effectively owing to the good management of provision. The headteacher has led a suitably frank and critical evaluation of standards and procedures throughout the school and has developed effectively prioritised measures for improvement in the school development plan. Tracking procedures are already developed for the core subjects and underway for the non-core. The main issues for improvement, including raising standards, providing more challenge for higher attaining pupils and developing co-ordinators' roles for non-core subjects, have already been acknowledged by the school and preliminary steps are already being taken to resolve them. All staff know what they are working towards and the steps they will take to get there. There has been a well focused analysis of best practice and good opportunities have been taken to learn from the successes of other schools.

51. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are very supportive and actively involved at many levels. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for further improvement. They play a suitable part in shaping the direction of the school and holding it to account for standards in all areas. Financial management is good and resources, including funds and staffing are managed efficiently. The principles of best value are effectively applied.
52. The management of the headteacher is very effective and has resulted in the development of good whole-school policies and systems. The leadership and management by co-ordinators of the core subjects are good, but for some non-core subjects designation of responsibilities is still being developed, owing, in the main, to staff turnover. Clear lines of responsibility have been developed for the core subjects and are underway for the non-core. High priority is placed on developing skills of all staff and all staff are clear about their main roles and responsibilities. Performance management is very well established in the culture of the school and target setting and monitoring of achievement are developing very effectively.
53. An extensive building programme accompanied the opening of the school and the overall adequacy of the accommodation is good. There are specialist areas for the teaching of music and ICT. These make a good contribution to standards of pupils' work in these areas. However, not all problems with the building have yet been fully resolved. For example, the lack of air conditioning or suitable ventilation in the computer suite means that it often becomes uncomfortably hot, which has a negative effect on pupils' concentration. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum and they are deployed effectively. This has a particularly beneficial effect on the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs. Resources are good overall and are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money currently and is in a good position to improve this still further in the future.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order to raise standards further the headteacher and governors should:-
 - (1) Raise standards attained by pupils in English, mathematics and science, which are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 4, by:-
 - i. making targets for improvement explicit to pupils and their parents;
 - ii. involving pupils more regularly in evaluations of their progress;
 - iii. placing even greater emphasis on developing pupils' day-to-day vocabulary and confidence in speaking and listening;
 - iv. developing pupils' skills in problem solving.
(paragraphs: 2, 3, 4, 5, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 83, 84, 85)
 - (2) Ensure that higher attaining pupils are challenged sufficiently in all lessons by raising expectations of achievement and making better use of the information gained from assessment of all subjects when planning lessons.
(paragraphs: 10, 20, 35, 72, 125)
 - (3) Develop the role of the curriculum co-ordinators for all non-core subjects so that they are aware of standards throughout the school and ensure consistency in methodology and progression in line with school policies, by:-
 - i. monitoring teaching and learning in all classes;
 - ii. scrutinising teachers' planning and evaluations;
 - iii. evaluating and monitoring pupils' work, skills and understanding as they progress through the school;
 - iv. developing whole-school schemes and policies that reflect the new school stance on the teaching of each area by informing and advising colleagues and any new staff of developments in their subject.
(paragraphs: 52, 90, 91, 96, 101, 109, 115, 120, 125)

(4) Improve the behaviour of pupils, particularly in the older classes, by:-

- i. raising all staff's expectations of pupils behaviour;
- ii. consistent application of the school's behaviour policy.
(paragraphs: 12, 18, 72, 119)

The governors may wish to consider the following minor issue:

- i. Some opportunities to use ICT in other subjects are missed.
(paragraphs: 104, 109)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

69

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	36	25	3	0	0
Percentage	0	7	52	36	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	34	418
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	67

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	81

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	22

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	41	38	79

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	36	34
	Girls	29	31	31
	Total	58	67	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (n/a)	85 (n/a)	82 (n/a)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	34	29
	Girls	33	32	30
	Total	65	66	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (n/a)	84 (n/a)	75 (n/a)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
310	1	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
7	0	0
2	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0

No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0
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The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	27.9

Education support staff: YR– Y4

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	363

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.3
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	926,775
Total expenditure	945,973.75
Expenditure per pupil	2,102
Balance brought forward from previous year	70,384
Balance brought forward from two closing schools, when budgets finalised	173,214
Balance carried forward to next year	220,774

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	452
Number of questionnaires returned	72

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	42	6	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	56	36	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	46	8	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	57	7	1	6
The teaching is good.	43	49	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	50	7	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	29	3	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	47	10	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	50	39	6	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	40	7	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	39	7	3	17

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. Children start in the Nursery in the September following their third birthday. They start in one of the three Reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Most of the children have had some experience of either the nursery or of local play-groups before they start school. At the time of inspection the children had been in their classes for nearly a whole year and were settled into their routines well.
56. Attainment on entry to school is currently well below average overall due to the far higher than average proportions of children at very early stages of development. This is most particularly the case in the areas of personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and communication, language and literacy. Assessment procedures in the Nursery and in the Reception classes are good and they are used well when planning work appropriate to the needs of all of the children. Work is marked and annotated well so that teachers and support staff have a clear picture of the progress made by each child and can monitor it effectively. This is especially the case for children with special educational needs who are identified and supported well from the start of their school career.
57. The Nursery and Reception classes are housed in a newly built annexe, which is open and bright and which teachers and support staff enhance with attractive arrangements of children's work and other displays. The quality of teaching in the early years classes is good overall and good use is made of well-qualified and experienced support staff. The children are provided with a good range of well-planned opportunities to develop their skills in all six areas of the foundation curriculum for that age. As a result, they make good progress in their learning and by the end of the Reception year are likely to attain the early learning goals in physical development, personal and social development and creative skills. Despite the good progress they make, standards in communication language and literacy, mathematical skills and knowledge and understanding of the world are below average overall, although many children attain the expected standards.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. The teaching of aspects of personal and social development is very good. There is very appropriate provision for the development of children's social and personal skills and, as a consequence, they make very good progress in this area of their learning. They learn to comply with the regular routines of the Nursery and Reception classes and their behaviour is generally very good. This is due to a consistency of approach by all adults and the high expectations they have of the children as well as the effective, well-established, daily routines. Children learn what is acceptable behaviour in school and what is not. In the Nursery, children show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities. They work and play happily alongside each other and maintain concentration for appropriate lengths of time, for example, painting seaside pictures and moulding dough. They are polite and respectful to adults and to each other and have generally positive attitudes to their learning. Reception children get highly involved in their activities, such as playing in the "travel agents". They learn to work as a group to express their feelings in appropriate ways and initiate friendships with others. They talk about home, such as telling the class about the birth of a new baby brother. They demonstrate pride in their achievements, such as when they make flags linked with a space theme in Reception. Standards are in line with those expected by the time they start in Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

59. Progress in communication, language and literacy is good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the development of language skills of young children. Lessons are planned appropriately, taking due consideration of literacy strategy guidelines in the reception classes. As a result of the good teaching, the children make steady progress in the acquisition of skills of literacy and language. Some have immature speech but make their needs known. There is an appropriate emphasis on the learning about the letters of the alphabet and the

development of phonic skills and this has a positive effect on the progress children make in learning to read. Nursery children ascribe meaning to the marks they make and know that pictures in books can give clues to the meaning of the text. The adults make good use of opportunities to extend and develop language in other lessons, such as in developing children's mathematical vocabulary. The children make suitable progress in learning to handle books and to form letters. Reception children hear and say the initial sounds in words and know which letters represent some of the sounds. They know that information can be given in the form of print and enjoy using books and computers. Higher attaining children use their phonic knowledge to write simple words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words. Vocabulary is developed well by early years staff, but many common words are unknown to a significant proportion of the children. Standards of work are still likely to be below average overall by the time they start in Year 1.

Mathematical development

60. The teaching of mathematics is good and leads to the children making steady, good progress in developing mathematical awareness. The adults provide a suitably wide range of opportunities for the children to use number and mathematical vocabulary in an interesting way throughout the day. For example, children in the nursery class learn to sing counting and number rhymes. These regular enjoyable opportunities lead to the children developing confidence in their number work. Reception children show increasing confidence in filling in missing numbers in a sequence. They help their teachers to count how many are present during registration and count to see how long it takes the class monitor to return the register to the school office. They learn to match shapes by recognising similarity in shape and orientation, such as when completing jig-saw puzzles. Standards are likely to be below those expected, by the time they start in Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is good and, as a consequence, the children make good progress in this area of their learning. They are given a wide variety of interesting experiences, which enable them to learn about the world in which they live. Knowledge of living things and daily life is effectively developed through the class topics such as that on the sea-side for nursery children and different forms of transport for reception children. Nursery children chatter enthusiastically about the similarities and differences in appearance and texture, of the shells, pebbles and other objects the teachers put for them. They look at the objects with magnifying glasses and pay great attention to what they see and hear and what is happening. For example, one reception child exclaimed, pointing to the shells, "You can hear the Ocean in them! Yes (listening) I can still hear it!" This work also has a positive effect on the development of their understanding as well as their vocabulary and enjoyment. Such as when two children noticed that they could see through their paper at the colours from the computer screen, saying "Its just magic!" They show a positive approach to their learning experiences. They are given suitable opportunities to use information technology and enjoy opportunities to use it to support their learning in numeracy and literacy or to draw pictures and patterns. They use computers with enjoyment and increasing confidence. They play in sand, water and with dough, examining materials and finding out more about them. They learn how to use a range of simple tools safely and carefully experiment with magnets and construction toys. Standards are still likely to be below those expected of young children by the time they start in Year 1.

Physical development

62. The teaching of this aspect of children's development is good overall. The children are given a good variety of suitable opportunities and make good progress in the development of their physical skills as a result. They handle construction toys and small tools with appropriate levels of dexterity and are learning to use crayons and pencils with developing skill when writing and drawing. When using small tools such as scissors they demonstrate increasing control and appropriate attention to safety. For example, when they use nets to "catch" a variety of toy sea creatures their teachers have placed in the water tray. They know about health issues and wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating their fruit. They are aware of the need to stay cool in hot weather and take off their cardigans, and Nursery children know to play in the shade of the tree, although many do not bring a hat to wear in very hot weather. There are good, regular

opportunities for structured, outdoor, imaginative and co-operative play in the

designated small play areas outside the classes. Children develop increasing control with a range of equipment at playtimes. They play on trikes and tractors following a route around tyres that their teachers have marked out for them. Standards are likely to be in line with those expected by the time they enter Year 1.

Creative development

63. The teaching of creative areas of development is good and as a result children make good progress in the development of their creative skills. They are given many, good opportunities to learn a variety of techniques such as moulding, painting and printing. Nursery children make marks on paper with paint and crayon. They show great interest in the things in the classroom, looking at the patterns on shells and other sea-side items. They use a wide range of materials and equipment to express themselves. When playing in the water tray they use one object to represent another as they play, imagining stories for the toy crabs and jelly-fish. They use paint, pencils, crayons, fabric and glue to make pictures and collages linked to their work, such as crêpe paper jelly-fish and “planets” made from dough and pebbles. They have suitable opportunities to participate in imaginative role-play in a range of situations to develop appropriate skills in imagination and communication, playing in the space ship or rescuing the “man overboard” from their pirate ship. They learn a range of rhymes and songs, which they sing with enjoyment and enjoy experimenting with sounds, such as tapping two pebbles together. Standards in creative areas are likely to be in line with those expected by the time the children start in Year 1.

ENGLISH

64. Attainment is low because pupils’ prior attainment is low. Pupils whose National Curriculum test results in 2002 were well below the national average entered this new school at the start of Year 2 with attainment which was well below the national average. At the end of their first year in the school, during which they were subject to long-term significant disruption, their attainment in National Curriculum tests remained well below average and their achievement, including the achievement of pupils with special needs, was satisfactory. The Year 2 pupils who took their tests in 2003 came into the school at the start of Year 1 with prior attainment below the national average. Having been subject to considerable disruption during the first year of the new school they started Year 2 with attainment which was well below average. Their achievement has been satisfactory overall.
65. By the end of Year 2 pupils’ speaking skills are weak. They lack the self-confidence to speak at an appropriate volume and much of what they say is unclear. They restrict what they have to say to a very few words and sometimes find it difficult to make what they have to say comprehensible to others. They are not helped in this by the fact that nearly all pupils have a very limited general vocabulary, although the more specialised vocabulary which they use in their work in English is better. For example, one pupil used the word “text” in connection with his reading in lessons but did not know the word “fin”.
66. Pupils express enjoyment of books and understand how a story develops. Most pupils, except those with the lowest attainment, understand that stories have a theme and can also work out the setting of a story, although to do this they rely more on picture clues than on reading. Pupils know how to use books to obtain information but their reading aloud is generally below what is expected of pupils of this age.
67. Most pupils write in short, complete sentences, although it is only higher attaining pupils who can make these more interesting by using a range of joining words. Higher attaining and average pupils begin to understand that writing can be done for a variety of purposes. Some pupils begin to use basic punctuation accurately, while a significant number of pupils use full stops and capital letters inconsistently or not at all. The spelling of lower attaining and some more average pupils

is weak and this is adversely affected by the fact that some pupils do not say words clearly or correctly. For example, a pupil could not spell “pink” because he thought it was pronounced “pick”. Pupils’ generally weak vocabulary has a limiting effect on the ideas they are able to express in writing. A large majority of pupils are only just beginning to use joined writing at the end of Year 2 and their formation of letters and joins is developing satisfactorily.

68. A full range of inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils when they leave the school at the end of Year 4 is below that which is expected of pupils of this age and they are not on course to reach the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils who are currently at the end of Year 4 entered the school at the beginning of Year 3 with attainment in national Curriculum testing which was below the national average, they have since undergone two years of significant disruption and their achievement, including that of pupils with special needs, has been satisfactory.
69. Pupils’ speaking is weak. They are very lacking in self-confidence and consequently do not speak loudly or clearly enough to make an impression on their listeners. They express their ideas briefly and simply, without developing them to give more information or animation. They are very hampered in the ideas they are able to express by having a very limited vocabulary, although their knowledge of words connected to work in English lessons, for example “glossary”, is good.
70. Pupils across the attainment range express great enjoyment of reading and can discuss in simple terms their reading habits and preferences. They understand how to use the school library and how to locate information in the books they select. Most pupils read aloud accurately, but without fluency or expression and are not confident about working out words which are new to them. They do not understand everything they read and do not ask when they are unsure. Pupils show understanding and appreciation of what they read in lessons and know some of the ways that writers develop their stories to make them interesting or exciting, using the appropriate subject vocabulary, for example “cliff-hanger”, confidently.
71. Most pupils write in complete sentences in which basic punctuation is used with developing accuracy. Some pupils are beginning to use more complex punctuation. The spelling and punctuation of most pupils is not sufficiently consistent, while for lower attaining pupils this is weak. Higher attaining pupils use an increasing amount of description to make their writing more interesting. Most pupils can write for a variety of purposes, for example to record the results of their research. Higher attaining and some average pupils begin to plan their writing in order to make it more effective. Pupils across the attainment range are limited by having a very small general vocabulary.
72. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. All teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory and some was good. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is lesson planning, which has clear objectives for the learning to take place. These are explained to the pupils, who know what to expect and what is expected of them. Teachers plan a generally good variety of activities to meet the needs of all pupils across the attainment range. Some pupils find it difficult to maintain their interest and concentration and they respond well to having a variety of activities in their lessons. Teachers’ expectations of what their pupils should attain are variable, but they are generally too low for higher attaining pupils, who could often attain more in lessons than is expected of them. In the less successful lessons pupils are expected to spend too much time listening to their teacher and on these occasions they become restless and easily distracted. Teachers make good use of questioning and discussion to develop pupils’ generally weak speaking skills, to bolster their self-confidence about the ideas they can express and also to extend and assess pupils’ knowledge and understanding. The way in which teachers manage behaviour in their classes is very variable. Some teachers have very clear expectations of the way that pupils should behave and clear routines to establish these. Pupils respond positively to these and do their best to behave acceptably. Some teachers are too tolerant of low-level distracting behaviour and a minority of pupils take the opportunity to behave in an inappropriate way. Marking is regular and supportive but does not offer sufficient specific advice about what pupils need to do to improve. There is overall suitable use of ICT and literacy is used appropriately to support other subjects.

73. The quality of leadership and management is good. There is a strong commitment to raising attainment and a particular strength is that there is good recognition of what needs to be done to achieve this. A wide range of thoughtful strategies has been put in place in order to improve standards in reading and the effectiveness of these has been reflected in the rise in attainment in reading in the latest National Curriculum tests. There are good strategies in place to assess and monitor pupils' progress and there is an exceptionally wide range of methods to record this, so that teachers have comprehensive knowledge of how well their pupils are progressing and what their targets are. An exception to this is in the recording of progress in reading, where there is no consistent method of recording progress. This has been recognised by the subject co-ordinator and there are plans to improve this. All these records are maintained meticulously, but insufficient use is made of them to guide the planning of the curriculum. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have individual targets for improving their English but these are not always useful to the pupils themselves, some of whom cannot read them and more of whom do not understand them. A very useful booklet has recently been prepared to guide teachers in the most effective way to offer advice to pupils about what they need to do to improve. The monitoring of the teaching of English is carried out regularly and thoroughly and there are firm plans to improve standards still further.

MATHEMATICS

74. Standards in Year 2 tests and teacher assessments were well below average in 2002. This is because there were high numbers of pupils with significant special needs in the classes. Well below average numbers of pupils achieved higher, level 3, grades.
75. Standards in Year 2 and 4 are below average. This is because pupils entered the school with below average levels of knowledge of mathematics. Furthermore, there are above average numbers of pupils who have significant special educational needs or statements of special educational needs. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and make suitable progress as a result of satisfactory teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as a result of the good quality support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Below average numbers of pupils achieve above average standards because teachers are not using information from individual assessment well enough to move these pupils on at a faster rate.
76. Pupils apply their numeracy skills satisfactorily in other subjects. For instance, in geography pupils handle data satisfactorily when they study people's occupations in Redditch. Science investigations give pupils opportunities to use their mathematical skills when they measure time in seconds. Mathematical vocabulary is used satisfactorily in pupils' writing and reading activities. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily when Year 4 pupils use computers to learn about equivalent fractions.
77. Standards of using and applying mathematics are below average. Most pupils use mathematical knowledge simply to answer problems. However, only a few more able pupils work at higher level 3 grades and choose the appropriate operation to solve complex problems. The majority of pupils in Year 2 investigate basically how many cubes a shoe holds. One more able pupil uses literacy skills well and writes, "I have found out that Eve can get the least amount of cubes in her shoe because she has the smallest shoe." Average and less able pupils rarely use their literacy skills to record their conclusions to investigations. Most pupils in Year 4 have below average problem solving skills. The majority of pupils use division and multiplication skills to solve simple problems. A few more able pupils in Year 4 solve problems accurately which include two steps using addition or subtraction.
78. Standards in number are below average overall. The school has placed a high emphasis on mental sessions at the beginning of lessons, which is beginning to have an impact on standards. However, there is only a small number of pupils in each class who carry out complex calculations using number. A significant strength of pupils' knowledge is in how to use money. Most Year 2 pupils add and subtract amounts of money satisfactorily. Some more able pupils accurately add and subtract amounts of money. For instance, one pupil effectively added three lots of fifty pence and thirty pence. The majority of Year 2 pupils use two, five and ten times tables satisfactorily to multiply and divide two digit numbers satisfactorily. Most Year 4 pupils calculate simple amounts

of money using the five times table. More able pupils work out complex three-part calculations. For instance, they effectively subtract two amounts from eight pounds and find the change from ten pounds.

79. Standards are below average in shape, space and measurement. A considerable number of pupils have special educational needs and work at below average levels of attainment. Most Year 2 pupils measure accurately to the nearest centimetre and tell time to the nearest half and hour. More able Year 2 pupils record times accurately to the nearest five minutes, half and quarter past the hour. For instance, they read and record times well such as 6:45 and 3:30. Most Year 4 pupils name basic shapes accurately and give some of their properties. More able pupils record in detail the properties of cuboids and pyramids. The majority of Year 4 pupils measure length effectively in centimetres. More able pupils effectively convert litres to millilitres and calculate the area of rectangles in centimetres squared.
80. Standards of handling data are below average. Most Year 4 pupils draw bar graphs satisfactorily. For example, they create bar graphs of the number of lights found in each Oak Hill school classroom. The majority of pupils begin understand probability when they draw graphs of the most commonly thrown number from a dice. There is little evidence of pupils answering questions about graphs.
81. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with good features. Teachers utilise the National Numeracy Strategy well. The best aspects of teaching include the effective use of teaching methods. This means that pupils are taught how to use the multiplication tables well to solve word problems. Teachers' good questioning skills mean that some pupils learn to explain which strategies they are using. Some teachers use small white boards effectively to develop pupils' understanding in whole-class activities. Basic skills are effectively taught in Year 2; pupils use number cards and learn how to halve and double numbers such as eighteen. Teachers often share learning objectives effectively with pupils orally and visually. This ensures that everyone is clear about the focus for the lesson. Teaching assistants support different groups of pupils effectively in lessons. Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics as a result of teachers' enthusiasm. In lessons pupils behave satisfactorily and concentrate due to teachers' satisfactory management skills. Social provision is good where pupils work together in groups. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen. This is because the teacher's knowledge of how to teach pupils about equivalent fractions was not clearly explained and so many pupils became confused. Time is sometimes wasted in a minority of lessons when pupils do not understand what they have to do during the main lesson's activity. Teachers sometimes do not use assessment well. This means that pupils cannot identify ways to improve their work.
82. The subject managers lead the subject effectively, although they have not had enough time to have had a significant impact on standards achieved. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored effectively. Pupils' tests are formally monitored and the evaluations are used to formulate future areas for development. In Year 3 and 4 pupils have individual targets, but pupils rarely have time to assess whether they have achieved them. The school effectively tracks pupils' progress from the time they enter to the school till they leave. Resources are satisfactory but the school lacks materials to develop pupils' problem solving strategies.

SCIENCE

83. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, their standards in science are below average although pupils make satisfactory progress. This is partly because of the low level of understanding at which pupils enter Year 1 and due to lower than expected language skills. Also, the pupils have experienced considerable disruption over the last two years while the new school was being established and building work carried out. Science is beginning to be well planned and organised throughout the school. Pupils are generally given suitable opportunities to investigate and hypothesise. The co-ordinator has identified the need for higher attaining pupils to have more opportunity to plan, investigate and record their own scientific ideas independently. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates and there is little difference in the attainment levels of boys and girls.

84. The pupils in Year 2 can sort materials into natural and man-made and understand the language used. They consider what they think will happen when they plan an investigation to keep ice from melting and they understand what a fair test is. However, they were a little unsure as to what “results” were or what “conclusion” meant. Pupils began to use a planning board in order to structure their investigation and when asked what they wondered about ice, pupils’ responses included “Why does ice melt in sunshine but not in cold, foggy weather?” and “How hot does it have to be for ice to melt?” Year 4 pupils tackled the concept of food chains, using terms such as “predator” and “producer”. Pupils had undertaken pond dipping and the teacher tried hard to help them understand why one might put different kinds of animals together in a pond.

85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching. As a consequence, pupils learn well and consistently. In a good lesson on plants for pupils in Year 3, the teacher had provided vegetables and flowers coloured with food dye and pupils discovered how liquids are transported through the stem of a plant. They made use of hand lenses as well as the electron microscope. In another good Year 2 lesson, pupils planned investigations and the teacher took time to find out pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils are given suitable opportunity to engage in scientific writing. They make use of a science-specific vocabulary, such as when pupils in Year 3 write letters of complaint about pollution and pupils in Year 2, write about the school allotment or scientific-themed poetry. Mathematics is well used in science work. Young children measure the root system on a mung bean which they are growing whilst Year 4 pupils use a thermometer and ruler and measure different parts of the body in centimetres, for example.
86. In most science work, standards of presentation are satisfactory and pupils take pride in their work. Information and communication technology is used well in some aspects of science. For example, pupils used the computer to research mini-beasts in Year 2, and pupils in Year 3 found out about rocks and soils from websites. They also research the importance of plants in the environment. Year 4 pupils investigated different habitats around the world and use is also made of the digital camera to record local habitats.
87. The newly appointed co-ordinator works hard. She is a subject specialist, has a good knowledge of the state of science throughout the school and is aware of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. She has recently included a health and safety component to the science policy.

ART AND DESIGN

88. Standards are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment and from all groups make satisfactory progress. Pupils enjoy art and often cite it as their favourite subject, saying how much they "like painting". They show good levels of concentration and enjoyment in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 3 were engrossed in their printing, when making repeating patterns in the style of William Morris.
89. Teaching is satisfactory overall and during the week of inspection some good teaching was seen. Teachers make good use of opportunities for pupils to use art and design to enhance their understanding of other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 study mosaics in history work linked to studying Roman life; pupils in Year 4 paint pictures of Hindu deities linked to their work in religious education. Pupils work in a suitable range of media to produce models, pictures and patterns. For example, pupils in Year 1 make careful plasticine models following a study of the work of Henry Moore. Pupils throughout the school are given appropriate opportunities to paint. Pupils in Year 1 paint and print sea-side pictures from memory and imagination. They look at the sea-side pictures of famous artists, such as Matisse, and make their own under-water pictures in cool, blue shades. Pupils in Year 2 develop this further, looking at the styles of Malevich and painting their own pictures in that style. Suitable use is made of ICT to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of art and design.
90. Pupils explore a good range of processes and in the junior classes, pupils combine their knowledge of materials and techniques and study pattern and printing. Pupils in Year 3 enthusiastically applied what they had learnt about block and stencil prints to make repeating patterns. Pupils in junior classes use sketch-books to record a range of work in pencil, crayon and felt pen. However, this work is frequently undated and there is little evidence of it being used and developed at a later date in other contexts or being marked by the teacher. This limits the impact it has on the progress pupils make or in monitoring their achievements. The co-ordinator is aware of this weakness and has plans to develop the use of sketch books further, when the subject and its management are reviewed in the coming year.
91. The school makes suitable provision for pupils who are particularly talented in art, by arranging for them to take part in locally arranged study days. Pupils with special educational needs are also supported effectively to enable them to take a full part in all activities. The co-ordination of the subject has had low priority until now as the school has focused on core areas of the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards in Year 2 and 4 meet national expectations throughout the school. All pupils are given suitable opportunities to plan, make, and then evaluate projects. Those pupils with special educational needs are suitably provided for and make satisfactory progress. There is no difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily in their planning and evaluation skills.
93. Standards of work seen in planning and designing are in line with those expected because of satisfactory teaching. A significant strength of pupils' knowledge is their designing skills. The best teaching includes the effective use of methods to develop good quality designs. For example, basic skills of planning are well taught when Year 2 pupils' produce suitably coloured designs for the "Joseph's coats" they then make out of fabric. More able pupils add colour and labels effectively to model home designs with mechanisms which raise a spider up a tube. Suitable opportunities are given for pupils to use numeracy skills, for example pupils in Year 4 add measurements to their torch designs to ensure they can incorporate a battery successfully. Most Year 4 pupils write good step-by-step instructions of how to make a torch. The majority of pupils from Year 2 to 4 write effective lists of the materials they will use, however they do not write separate lists of the tools they will require.
94. Standards of pupils' making skills are below average. Many products are not finished carefully. For example, some Year 2 pupils do not colour their 'Joseph's coats' effectively. Resources were used satisfactorily when most Year 1 pupils made model homes using wheels and axles to allow movement of a spider. There are appropriate links with other subjects. Year 4 pupils made satisfactory model homes when they studied Viking life. Pupils enjoy this subject because of their teachers' enthusiasm. The Year 4 pupils talked about the fun they had working together making biscuits and Viking bags. Information and communication technology is occasionally used to support pupils' learning in this subject. Some Year 2 pupils use computers to design their 'Joseph's coats'.
95. Standards of pupils' evaluation skills are satisfactory. Effective links with English mean that the pupils' evaluations of products use literacy skills appropriately. For instance, a more able Year 4 pupil produces a suitable evaluation of a torch, writing, "I would improve my torch by changing the size of the tube so that I could put things inside it". Teachers' use of assessment is satisfactory but marking does not allow pupils to identify how they could improve their work.
96. Good leadership and management have been responsible for establishing an effective curriculum. A considerable strength of the co-ordinator's work is in the monitoring of the teachers' planning. Pupils' work is beginning to be monitored and held in a portfolio. However, areas for development have not yet been shared with other staff. This subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development when they work together in pairs and groups. It also makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development when they are amazed by the way materials can be combined and they reflect on their experiences. The co-ordinator has not monitored the quality of teaching. Although assessment systems are satisfactory teachers do not often record skills pupils could develop in the future.

GEOGRAPHY

97. Standards in geography are broadly in line with what is expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 4 and pupils make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. During the week of inspection only one lesson was observed but it is possible to come to judgements about standards through an examination of pupils' work, discussion with the co-ordinator, displays and discussions with pupils. These standards are achieved due to the practical nature of the subject. Teachers make good use of visual materials such as maps, globes and pictures. This allows pupils access to the curriculum more easily than through text. Also, difficulties with written English are less noticeable in geography as recording is not as fulsome or structured as in some core subjects. The school has adopted the national scheme of work. Good attention is paid to covering the content of geography in the National Curriculum and the development of geographical skills.

98. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of the immediate area and of places beyond. They extend their knowledge of maps and locations and thoroughly explore the fictional island of Struay, the island home of "Katie Morag". They study its location in the United Kingdom, find out how to get there and discover the human and physical features on the island.
99. By the end of Year 4, pupils continue to make sound progress in acquiring geographical skills and knowledge and their attainment is satisfactory. Most pupils can use a map with some accuracy, they begin to understand map symbols and higher attaining pupils begin to use four-figure coordinates. They study an Indian village and compare climate, lifestyles and schooling and make use of secondary sources to research this work.
100. Overall, work seen indicates that teaching is good. Coverage of the National Curriculum is apparent and pupils appear to enjoy the subject. Pupils get many opportunities to use English in geographical work, especially when presenting factual writing. Data-handling skills are well used when studying the occupations of people in Redditch. Teachers use suitable methods to make lessons interesting and appealing.
101. The co-ordinator is aware of the state of the subject throughout the school and knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Although ICT is used for geographical research, she is aware that there is scope for greater development across the school, especially in the infants. As yet, there is no opportunity to monitor the quality of geography teaching in school. Resources are satisfactory but some are in need of updating.

HISTORY

102. Standards meet national expectations in Years 2 and 4. Standards are high enough because the school uses objects, books and photographs well to develop pupils' basic skills. Literacy skills are used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of history. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress in their learning about the past. Boys and girls achieve similar standards because they receive effective teaching.
103. In Year 2 standards are average. The standards of work seen indicate that teaching is good. The majority of pupils begin to place events in order. This is seen when pupils ordered the main events of the "Great Fire of London". More able pupils know many details about the story. For instance, one wrote, "The houses were made of wood and they were built close together". Most Year 2 pupils can demonstrate their clear understanding of what Florence Nightingale did. This was seen when a pupil wrote, "She made thousands of people better. In the night she carried a candle". Teachers' good subject knowledge and understanding mean that Year 1 pupils learn about what people wear on the beach in modern and older times. Good use of open-ended questioning means that pupils learn to give reasons why a picture is modern or old. Basic skills are taught well and literacy skills are used effectively, as when pupils wrote notes about Roman life using bullet points. Numeracy skills are used satisfactorily to develop pupils' understanding of history; for example pupils created a time line explaining how people tackled fires through the ages. At the ends of lessons teachers rarely tell pupils what they should do to improve their work further.
104. In Year 4 standards are average overall because of good teaching. Most pupils have above satisfactory skills in describing historical periods. A significant strength of Year 4 pupils' knowledge is in the life of Vikings. Most Year 4 pupils use literacy skills well, as seen in their writing on an introduction to their project on Viking life. More able pupils wrote detailed descriptions of the Viking clothes. For instance, "The girls and women wore long tunics and an apron on top. In winter they would wear a blanket and a brooch to keep it in place". Teachers' effective knowledge and understanding allow pupils to develop their basic skills well. The majority of Year 4 pupils can compare and contrast life in Viking times with the present day. Resources are used well by teachers to integrate all pupils including those from different backgrounds. This means that pupils learn to combine information from different places. For example, pupils studied a variety of Roman mosaics effectively before they wrote about ancient Roman customs. Pupils do not often give reasons for events or changes in historical happenings. Information and communication technology is not often used to allow pupils to carry out research. The teachers'

marking does not enable pupils to identify future development areas. Teachers' planning is satisfactory, but does not always note ways to extend more able pupils' learning.

105. The leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has had a considerable influence in setting up an effective curriculum and has supported staff well to establish average standards. Monitoring and evaluation have been effectively established through a portfolio of pupils' work. Teachers assess work satisfactorily but do not often record their assessments of pupils' attainment on their planning so that their findings can be used to adapt teaching of future topics.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Boys and girls of all levels of ability and from all groups make satisfactory progress in developing their skills and understanding in the subject. Classes have regular sessions in the well equipped computer suite each week and, in addition, there is a good number of computers in each classroom. There is currently a computer club which extends pupils' opportunities for developing the skills they learn in lessons. However, the ventilation in the computer suite is poor. This results in very high temperatures in the room on sunny days, which make it difficult for pupils and staff to work comfortably and concentrate fully on their work.
107. Throughout the school pupils are learning to use technology to find things out and to exchange and share information. Pupils in the infant classes develop good levels of confidence in using word processing and keyboard skills. They regularly use computers to support work in literacy and numeracy. They explore information from a range of sources and enter, save and retrieve their work. In the junior classes, pupils use ICT skills effectively to collate data and create block graphs. They produce attractive pieces of writing, altering font size and colour. For example, pupils in Year 3 write well-presented and thoughtful poems. Pupils throughout the school are learning to use the Internet to send and receive messages. The progress they make is satisfactory but has been inhibited by the current fragility of the system, which causes problems as connections sometimes cannot be made.
108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers are confident, in the main, in their knowledge of the subject and plan lessons appropriately to build on pupils' prior knowledge. They plan lessons in year groups to ensure that pupils in all classes have equal access to the curriculum. Pupils have generally positive attitudes to their work and behaviour is satisfactory overall. Teachers keep effective records of pupils' attainment and the progress they make. Teaching skills are suitably developed and teachers use the interactive screen to demonstrate lessons effectively. On the occasion when unsatisfactory teaching was observed it was due to the teacher's lack of confidence and adaptability in planning when computer systems didn't work as they should. This then resulted in pupils become restless and inattentive and led to unsatisfactory progress in learning.
109. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory overall and is undergoing change because of the re-organisation and rationalisation of areas of responsibility within the school. The new co-ordinator has good knowledge and confidence in the subject and has plans to provide wider opportunities in school for pupils who do not have access to computers other than in school to use them outside normal lesson times for research and homework. She has audited resources and has plans to develop them further to extend opportunities for them to be used in other subjects. Currently good use is made of computers in some lessons such as science. But on other occasions opportunities to use ICT to support work are missed.

MUSIC

110. In music, the school's time-tabling arrangements and the timing of the inspection meant that it was possible to observe only one lesson. However, examination of planning indicates that the work meets National Curriculum requirements and that pupils work at appropriate levels for their age. Standards in music are satisfactory and most of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress during their time in school. Singing is a strength of the music curriculum and in morning collective worship, infants and juniors sing well.

Their diction is clear, they sing tunefully and with obvious enjoyment, younger pupils adding actions to their singing.

111. Year 3 pupils explore pitch. They recognise high and low notes and use subject specific language well, using terms such as “volume”, “notes” and “pitch”. Pupils study the xylophone and can tell where the instrument is struck to make high or low notes. This gives good opportunities to develop pupils’ listening skills. Pupils have generally positive attitudes to music.
112. In the infants and juniors, pupils get suitable opportunities to take part in performances, whether family assemblies or Christmas concerts. Older pupils take part in a Christingle service in the local church. The developing school choir takes part in a non-competitive music festival and the school has sung in the “Young Voices” singing festival in Birmingham.
113. Opportunities for composition are more limited throughout the school. This is due to lack of staff confidence in this aspect of the music curriculum but it is hoped that a published scheme will be introduced soon in order to support staff development.
114. Teaching is satisfactory overall and in the lesson seen it was good. Pupils were introduced to good quality music making and this extended their listening skills, leading to composition work. Music provision in school is enhanced by musical extra-curricular activities and this is fully inclusive so that all pupils, irrespective of gender, race, background or ability, can be involved and supported effectively.
115. Violin lessons are taught by a peripatetic teacher and are well supported by parental contributions. The music co-ordinator, herself a talented pianist, is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and the needs of the staff for further professional development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. The attainment in physical education of pupils at the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations for pupils of this age and they make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs.
117. They understand the purpose and importance of warming up before physical exercise and can explain in very simple terms that their muscles need to be stretched and warm in order for them not to injure themselves. Pupils can respond to a mood set for them by their teacher by making controlled and appropriate body shapes and movements. They can link these into a short sequence, or replicate the shapes produced by others. Their development of ball skills is satisfactory and they begin to be able to send and pass a ball the correct distance and with appropriate force. Alongside this they show their understanding of the basis of invasion games by appropriately defending against the ball. They have an appropriate sense of team spirit and respect for fair play. There is occasionally some disparity between pupils’ theoretical understanding of a skill and their ability to put it into effective practice. For example, pupils who understood why they should pass the ball with the side of their foot persisted in kicking it with their toe and could not understand why it then went too high. Pupils do not evaluate their own work or that of others because they have insufficient opportunity to do so.
118. Attainment at the end of Year 4 is also in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs. They have a good understanding of the necessity for warming up before exercise and the effect this has on them. Pupils’ ball skills are rather varied. Some control the ball fluently and confidently, others find it difficult to concentrate sufficiently and are at an earlier stage of development. Pupils have an at least satisfactory and sometimes good level of agility and physical co-ordination and they control their movement confidently. They show interest and respect for the rules of ball games, asking simple questions which show that they regard these as being of importance. Many pupils focus more on the idea of winning than on the patient development of skills. Pupils have good levels of water confidence and their attainment in swimming is good, about three-quarters of pupils reaching at the end of Year 4 the swimming competence expected of pupils two years older.

Pupils enjoy the subject but find it difficult to evaluate their own performance or that of others because they have too few opportunities to do so.

119. Teaching is satisfactory overall and during inspection a significant proportion of the teaching was good. Teachers plan their lessons satisfactorily, with clear objectives for the learning that is to take place. They make regular and satisfactory use of warm-up and cool-down exercises and can explain clearly the necessity for these. In the most successful lessons teachers had clear expectations of behaviour and well-established routines, to which pupils responded positively by putting effort into their work and maintaining good concentration during extremely hot and humid weather. When teachers are less vigilant about behaviour a minority of pupils take the opportunity to behave inappropriately. Teachers make good use of demonstration, by both themselves and pupils, in order to reinforce learning but offer too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work or the work of their peers. Pupils do not make enough progress in this area of their work. Teachers place a clear emphasis on the importance of the steady development of skills, rather than on the importance of winning or turning every activity into a competition.
120. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has highlighted some appropriate areas for development and has made a satisfactory start on implementing them. The school now takes part in a programme of regular inter-school sporting competitions. There are sensible plans for some “refresher” in-service training in the teaching of some aspects of gymnastics after a fairly lengthy period without climbing equipment. Good use is made of the facilities that are available locally for the teaching of swimming and pupils make good progress. Good use is also made of what is available locally in terms of outside coaches and pupils benefit from being taught by qualified sports coaches both in some lessons and in extra-curricular activities. The assessment of pupils’ attainment and progress is informal and few records are kept, except for pupils’ progress in swimming. The subject has exceptionally good resources, both in terms of equipment and space and good use is made of them.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. Because of the way the timetable is organised it was not possible to observe any religious education lessons in Years 1 and 2. Inspection judgements for these two year groups are based on a careful scrutiny of work previously carried out by pupils. Attainment at the end of Year 4 is also in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress. In all age groups many pupils are hampered by weak literacy skills and untidy presentation.
122. Pupils’ work, both in their books and displayed around the school indicates that attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Pupils have knowledge and understanding of events which took place in the Bible, for example the story of Jacob. They understand that the Old Testament is common to both Christianity and Judaism. They can make links between what can be learned from the Bible and their own lives. For example, they use the story of the Prodigal Son to reflect on their own ideas on repentance and forgiveness and have a limited understanding that this concept is an important aspect of Christian belief. In the same way, pupils are able to make links between events in their own lives and important moral concepts, making clear links between “Poppy Day” and their own ideas on remembrance. There is clear understanding of the beliefs and practices of Judaism, which was much enhanced by a visit to a synagogue. The photographs and writing about this visit produced by pupils in Year 2 indicate both a lively interest in and respect for beliefs and practices with which they are not familiar and some pupils use vocabulary specific to Judaism, for example “prayer shawl” confidently.
123. Pupils in the junior classes know about some of the major figures in Christianity, for example St Francis of Assisi, and of Hinduism, for example Gandhi, and show understanding of their contribution to religious and moral thought. Most pupils understand Gandhi’s ideas on social equality. In their written work, pupils are a little less secure in their understanding of what can be

learned about our lives today from the study of religious belief. The visit which was made to a local church did much to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christian practice and the special nature of religious artefacts and architecture. They show clear understanding of the concept of prayer and worship and how these feature in the lives of many people. They showed enthusiasm for learning about the religious practices in cultures very different from their own, for example pilgrimage to the Ganges, and made links between this and the fact that the pilgrims have strong religious beliefs which lead them to wish to visit places with have special religious significance for them.

124. The teaching seen in Years 3 and 4 was at least satisfactory and some was good. Teachers, including one temporary teacher who had been in the school for a very short time, plan their lessons to be interesting, relevant and appropriately resourced from a number of sources, including the Internet. They give good opportunities for discussion and reflection, for example on the nature of relationships and the significance they have on our lives. Many pupils are able to make only very limited contributions to discussions because of their limited general vocabulary and lack of self-confidence, although they listen with apparent interest. Year 1 pupils had been given a good opportunity to think and write very briefly about the idea of what is "special" in the natural world. Teachers make good use of the vocabulary specific to the subject to widen pupils' own vocabulary and give them the language with which to discuss their ideas. Very good use is made of high quality visits to places of worship and the displays which pupils produce afterwards indicate that they made good progress in understanding the nature and practice of religious belief.
125. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There has been a temporary subject leader for a few months but previously the leader was very well qualified in religious education and supplemented the schemes of work produced by a national educational body with further ideas, particularly in the area of moral and social beliefs. Pupils are given good opportunities to record their knowledge and understanding in a various forms, but there are no methods for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress. The subject is well resourced and good use is made of visits and visitors into school.